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Joan Matthews, 98, Fashion Model, Painter, Enjoyed World Travel

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Date : July 11, 2021

Joan Kimball Matthews passed away on May 26, 2021. She was 98.

She lived a remarkable life as a loving wife, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. Her family was her greatest joy.

Joan was born on May 24, 1923 in New York City, the daughter of Abbott Kimball and Marion Graham Kimball, and grew up in Bronxville, New York.

She attended Ashley Hall in Charleston, South Carolina; Pine Manor College in Wellesley, Massachusetts; and Finch College in New York City. Later she attended Parsons School of Design to continue pursuing her passion for painting.

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In her 20s, while working at Lord & Taylor in New York City, Joan's long auburn hair and glamour caught the eye of John Powers, whose top modeling agency signed her on with Mademoiselle magazine. A highlight of Joan's life was her trip to Rio de Janeiro modeling for Mademoiselle.

Joan married William Cary Matthews on May 24, 1947 in New York City. After honeymooning in Bermuda, they moved to Darien, where they started their family. In 1959 they moved with their four children and Eva Mae Morris to San Francisco, where Bill was transferred to manage the Foote, Cone & Belding advertising agency.

Joan and Bill were married for 47 years, until Bill died unexpectedly in 1991. They had a devoted life together both at home and on numerous world trips.

Joan is best described as a gifted abstract expressionist and oil painter. Her language was color, and she taught her children how to see the world artistically through shape and composition.

She continued studying painting at the Art Academy in San Francisco and with painters in Carmel, California — where the family had a weekend home. In 1968 Joan had a successful one-woman show at the Corwith Gallery on Union Street in San Francisco.

Joan exuded energy and optimism. She will be remembered as an outspoken and animated conversationalist and an avid walker, often seen climbing the hills of San Francisco. She had a positive outlook and a wonderful sense of humor.

Joan was preceded in death by her parents, husband, and sister, Ann Kimball Andresen. She is survived by her four children, Willy Matthews (Laura) of Denver, Kim Matthews Wheaton (John) of Ridgefield, Washington; Cary Matthews Nowell (Tom) of San Francisco, and Peter Matthews of New York City; her grandchildren: Poppy Bernasek, Laura Evans, Will Wheaton, Henry Wheaton, Austin Matthews, Alistair Matthews, Peter Nowell, Abigail Nowell; and her great-grandchildren: Audrey Bernasek, Thomas Bernasek, Charlie Evans and Lucy Evans.

— [This obituary](#) was published on Legacy.com by the SFGate website.